



winnipeg plan to end youth homelessness

Implementing a Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Winnipeg

December 4, 2015

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The Current Steering Committee

Macdonald Youth Services Youth Agencies Alliance Spence Neighbourhood Association

New Directions Resource Assistance for Youth Voices Youth in Care Network

Eagle Urban Transition Centre The 595 Prevention Team Ndinawe Youth Resource Centre

Rainbow Resource Centre Rossbrook House Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

Canadian Mental Health Association , MB and Wpg Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

Manitoba Housing and Community Development



Intention Of The Day



- To connect and engage
- To update and bring understanding to the issue
- To hear your voice/opinions
- To ensure we are not missing any key points/people
- To create strong communication pathways
- To align our efforts/work together
- To mobilize

How We Got Here And Where We're Going



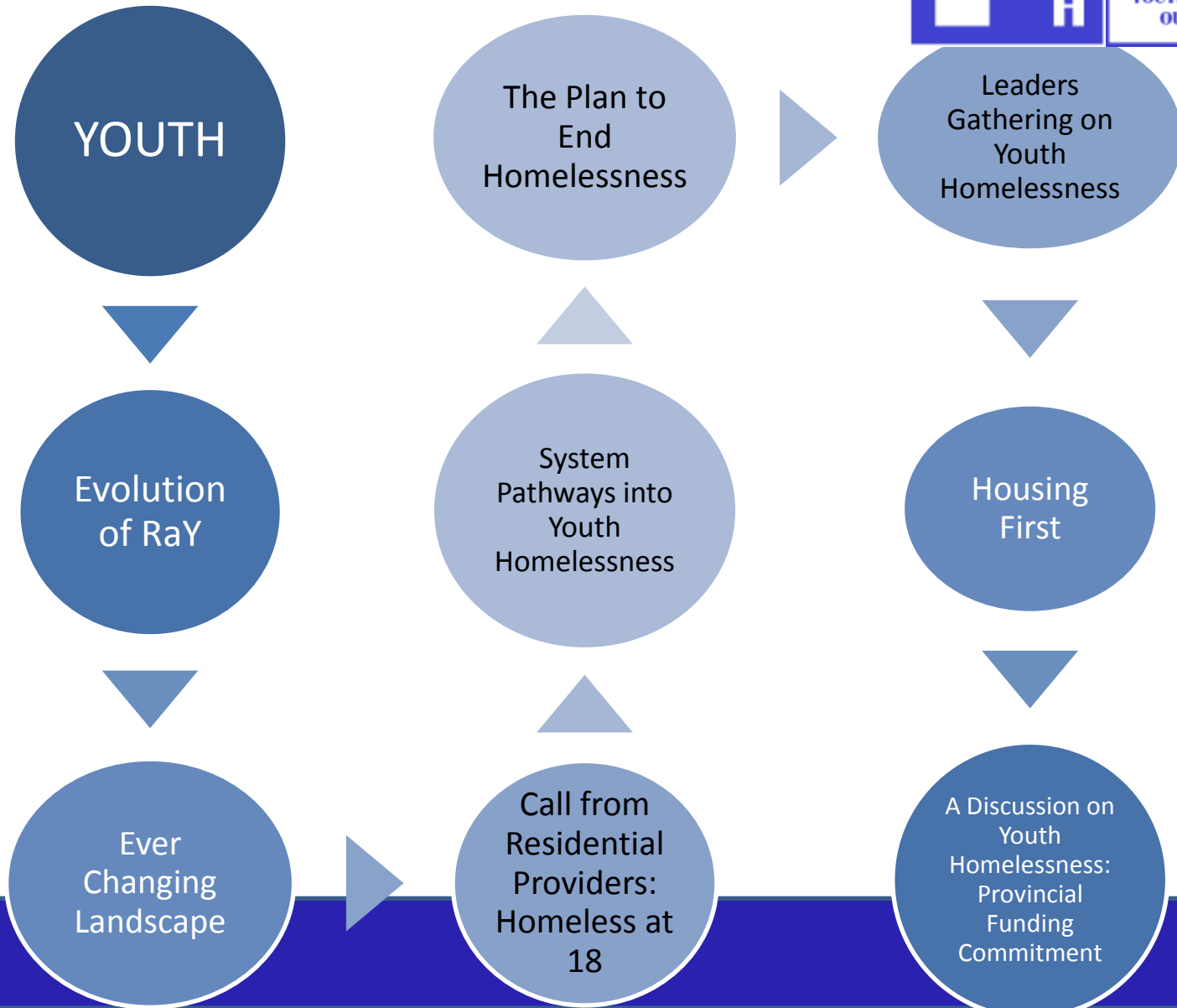
Kelly Holmes

Executive Director

Resource Assistance for Youth

WPEYH Steering Committee Chair

How We Got Here



What We Know About Winnipeg



- **Child poverty** capital of Canada
- **Murder Capital** for 16 of the past 33 years, Winnipeg has been Canada's
- **Gangs** 35 in Winnipeg, with 1,400-1,500 active gang members
- **Indigenous overrepresentation** in all systems
- **Children in care** 10,000 in care and an additional 500 with extensions of care
- **Low vacancy** 2.8%
- **Extreme weather**
- Higher drop out rate than most major Canadian cities
- **Migration** from rural and remote communities
- **System** exits into homelessness
- Without supports youth are in grave danger
- Youth want and need support beyond 18 years
- **Mental health** resources are unable to keep up with demand
- **Housing First** cannot mean housing only for youth

Considerations For Planning

- LGBTQ2S* Youth
- Newcomer Youth
- Indigenous Youth
- Racialized Youth
- Youth with mental health and/or addictions
- Other marginalized populations

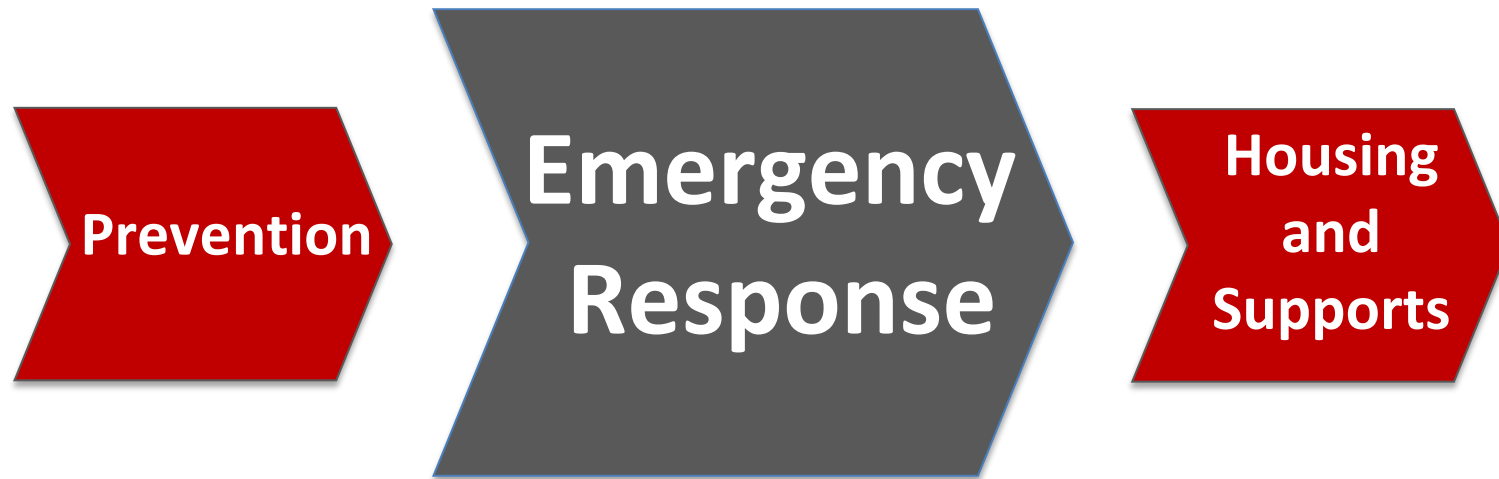
Youth Need a Distinct Plan

- On average in Canada most youth are staying at home with their parents until the age of 29
- No rental history
- No work history
- Lacking education
- Often no ID
- Not completely autonomous and without supports
- Unable to navigate systems
- Lacking trust
- Vulnerable to exploitation/making poor decisions

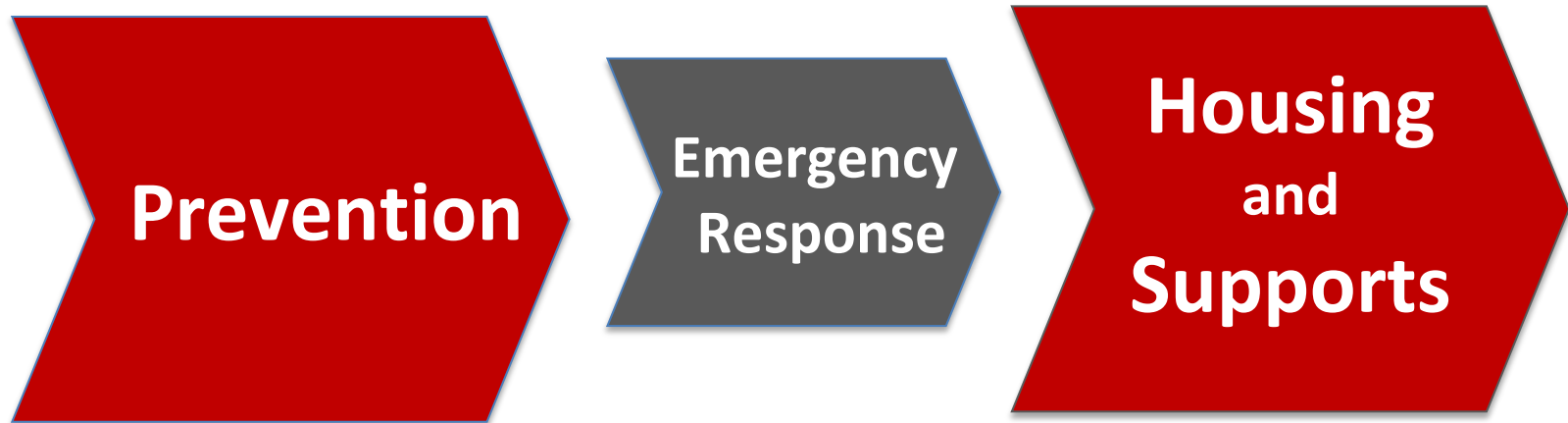
Current Response to Homelessness



Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc.



Can We Move To This?



Collective Impact

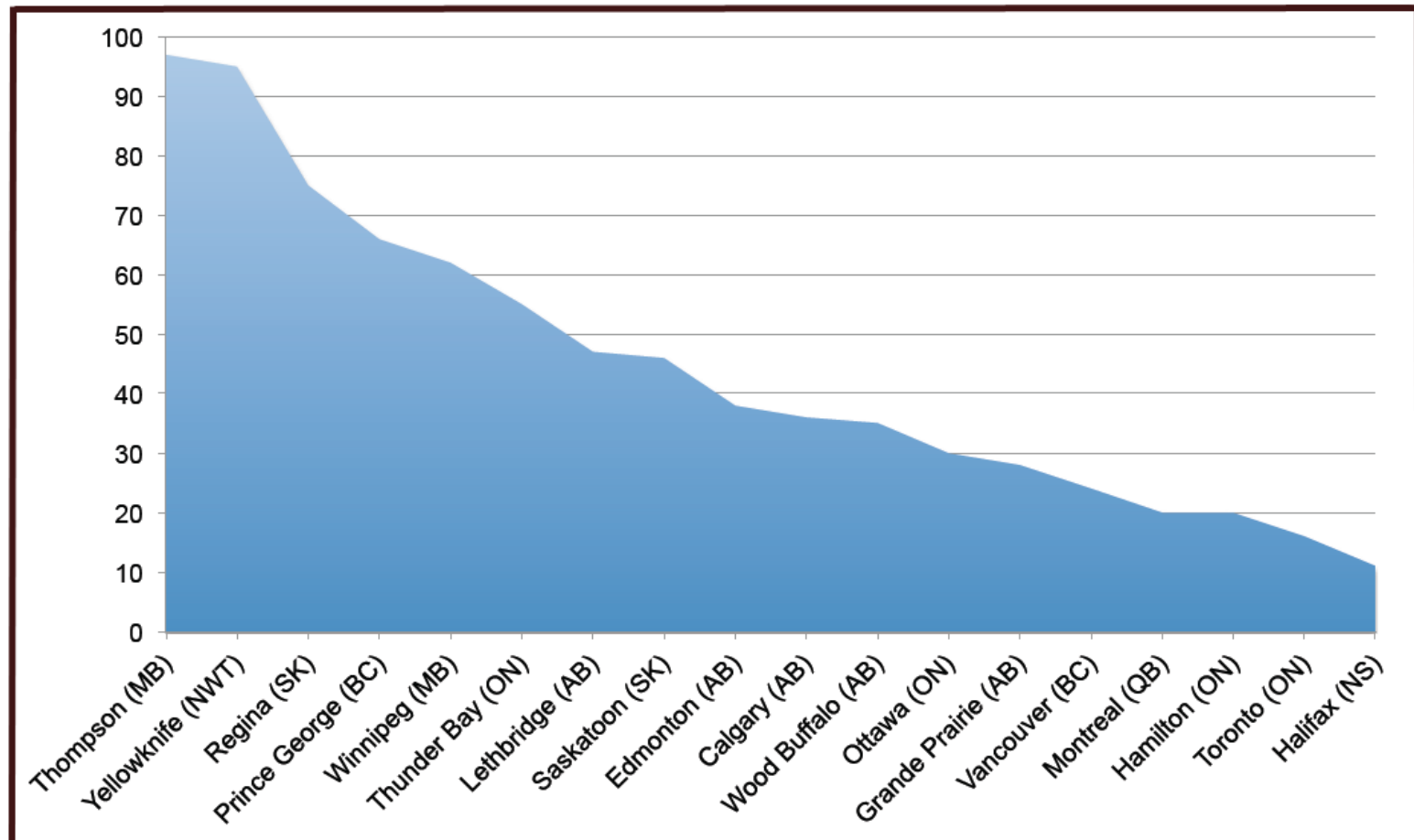
- Solving youth homelessness is not the sole responsibility of the sector
- Youth homelessness is a **fusion policy** issue



Indigenous Youth Homelessness



Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples



Indigenous In Manitoba



16.7% of the total population in Manitoba (Statistics Canada, 2011)

Winnipeg has the largest urban Indigenous population in Canada, 10% (Stat Canada, 2009)

Child poverty capital: 62% of Indigenous children are living below the poverty line (Mcdonald & Wilson, 2013)

70-80% of the children in care are Indigenous (2010, CCPA)

71.3% of youth admitted into correctional services (2010/2011
Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics)

111 missing and murdered Indigenous women in Manitoba
(Pearce, 2013)

Coming Together



**Breaking
Down
Silos**

Working together

- ✓ Work with End Homelessness Winnipeg so the youth plan will nest within the larger plan
- ✓ Support from the “A Way Home” national coalition on youth homelessness, toolkits, information and national backbone support
- ✓ Brandon at the table and northern remote communities
- ✓ Government/ decision makers are coming to the table
- ✓ System representatives
- ✓ Funders table
- ✓ Local research
- ✓ Practitioners
- ✓ Community led



Alberta is Shifting the Response

Prevention

Emergency Services

Youth Shelters

Housing and Supports

Healthy Transitions

Supports to families and parents

Multi-system collaboration

Improved access to health services

Learning, training and employment

Education and awareness

Family reunification

Targeted responses for specific populations

Expansion of the housing continuum

Harm reduction model approach

Rapid rehousing of youth

Outreach supports

Good News!



- We have done our homework
 - PIT count and Pathways Into Youth Homelessness
- We know what's working and what isn't
- We have identified the gaps and barriers
- We have been resourcing young people inexpensively
- We know how to build bridges to service
- We work and function as a community

THE KIDS ARE NOT ALRIGHT...

**Youth Aging Out of Care and Homelessness
in Manitoba**

**Summary of May 2012 Youth Summit
Position Paper**

Sean Gander, New Directions

Youth in Care = Homeless Adults

- 500 youth age out of care annually in MB and the numbers are growing
- 43% of homeless people surveyed in Winnipeg had been involved in the child welfare system (Canada and US studies 50%)
- At greatest risk: those who have a disability, have poorer physical health and those who experience mental health issues, trauma and abuse
- This population have higher rates of drug & alcohol use, gang involvement, sex trade exploitation and often do not finish high school
- This decreases essential life skills and increases involvement with justice, emergency and institutional health care

Key Contributing Factors

- In May 2012, a number of community-based organizations (CBOs), government representatives, private landlords and housing groups as well as academics came together to discuss and review the main issues facing youth in care who are at-risk of homelessness
- The CBOs identified a number of ***key factors*** in the child welfare system that contributes to the risk of homelessness in youth aging out of care:

1. ***Lack of resources for prevention***, such as helping children and youth address the issues that lead them into care and mitigating negative experiences once in care such as changing placements multiple times;
2. ***Lack of resources*** to address the need of youth with ***FASD, mental health issues, addictions*** and ***co-occurring disorders***;
3. ***Lack of frontline and policy level focus on*** what it takes to ***transition*** and get youth ready for adulthood such as making available ***more flexible resources and supports*** (for a longer time period beyond emancipation), ***more transition services*** and ***better planning*** for the long-term at the outset;

4. ***The arbitrary*** nature of youth ***leaving care at a certain pre-determined age*** that does ***not*** necessarily ***reflect the age*** at which a youth is ***developmentally or situationally ready*** to exit
5. ***Inflexibility of the care system*** to serve the needs of ***youth who have aged out*** or voluntarily exited care either prematurely or upon reaching the age of majority;
6. ***Lack of positive supportive relationships;***
7. ***Lack of affordable and suitable housing*** (both transitional and long term);

8. ***Lack of access*** to appropriate ***education and training*** programs;
9. ***Lack of coordination*** with health, housing, social service and justice ***government systems***; and
10. ***Lack of coordination*** with ***health, housing, social service and justice community-based organizations***

The Costs

- Governments have acknowledged the high cost of this social issue on health care, social service and justice expenditures.
- Many studies have shown that the cost of managing homelessness frequently exceeds the cost of prevention and of pro-actively providing adequate affordable housing and support.
- These costs do not include the lost opportunities— our communities lose out on when youth are not able to become educated and contributing members of society.

A Problem with a Solution

- Youth serving CBOs and other advocates and researchers have known that one of the best ways to end homelessness is to prevent it from happening in the first place
- Given the large numbers of adults who are homeless that have had involvement with the child welfare system, and the costs associated with homelessness – an obvious place to start is to address a number of the frontline, policy and legislation challenges facing the child welfare system
- Providing these youth with the necessary combination of housing and supports is key to preventing homelessness

Principles for Change & Recommendations

1. A Coordinated Continuum of Adequately Resourced Supports

- a. Develop a inter and intra government unit or branch or committee tasked with addressing the legislation, policy and program issues relating to youth aging out of care. Stakeholders should include representatives from community-based youth serving sector, child welfare, education, health and mental health, social services and employment and income assistance, housing and community development and justice;

- b. Ensure that there is funding allocated for transition planning in the child welfare system and Employment and Income Assistance budgets;
- c. Create and resource the following positions:
 - System navigators
 - Post care workers within the child welfare system
 - Youth aging out of care advocate position within the Office of the Children's Advocate
 - Employment and Income Assistance workers that are designated to support youth in care and those aging out
- d. Mandatory training for staff working with youth aging out of care. This should include training on compassion fatigue; developing youth competencies; and trauma informed service;

- e. Mandate that all youth aging out of care have access to free mental health supports;
- f. Create an Assertive Community Treatment team for high needs youth aging out of care;
- g. Mandate that all youth aging out of care have access to free mental health supports;
- h. Target supports to Aboriginal families and communities to keep children out of the child welfare system.

2. Proactive Transition Planning

a. Mandate comprehensive transition planning that begins when a child enters care. This should include:

- Life skills assessments on a regular basis that include “must have” core life skills competencies;
- Transition planning assessments that take into account and respond to when a youth is developmentally ready to exit;
- Exit requirements such as a bank account, identification, damage deposit, money for rent, resume, a suitable support system etc.
- Post care follow up at three, six, twelve and twenty four months
- Ensure that supports are available post care
- Ensure that there are appropriate supports for youth leaving care from reserves and rural areas

- b. Support and expand evidence based transition planning and mentoring programs such as MYTEAM and the Eagles Nest; and
- c. Make post-secondary education and training free for all youth exiting care.

3. Create Appropriate and Affordable Housing for Youth in Care and Those Transitioning Out

- a. Mandate that all systems workers cannot discharge youth in care into homelessness;
- b. Mandate that youth must have suitable, secure and affordable housing prior to exiting care;

- c. Ensure that Manitoba Housing and Community Developments housing plans have strategies to address the housing needs of youth aging out of care. This should include: emergency, transitional and long term housing. Housing should be coordinated with relevant service providers and a Housing First approach should be adopted for this population;
- d. Make the Portable Housing Benefit available to youth aging out of care who are at-risk of homelessness;

- e. Examine and amend Residential Tenancies Act to better meet the needs of youth aging out of care;
- f. Create housing support programs for youth and ensure that landlords in the private market are able to access;
- g. Create a Rent Bank for youth aging out of care; and
- h. Develop a program for landlords similar to foster parent intentional damage compensation plan.

Full report with site references available



SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Christina Maes Nino

Community Animator

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg



SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

**What Youth Told us About
Child and Family Services:**

*“I just think they let go of their kids
unprepared”*



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Agency Staff Told us About Child and Family Services:

“There’s no mandate, no accountability and kids keep falling through the cracks”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Youth Told us About Employment and Income Assistance:

“I just finished filing a report today. I received some kind of payment... MSGBA, I don't know what that means, it said that on my bank statement. Welfare is the most difficult [system to navigate].”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Agency Staff Told us About Employment and Income Assistance:

“There are a lot of hoops and they’re not at the point in their life to jump through all those hoops. They’re hungry, they’re tired, they’re fed up with all these systems that seem to be letting them down”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Youth Told us About Justice:

“The jails are pretty overcrowded; they don’t have time to do one on one... When it comes to like being released like there’s not really anything... other than you have conditions and stuff like that, more restrictions.”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Agency Staff Told us About Justice:

‘People don’t understand why youth are getting in conflict with the law; robbery might be a 12 year-old boy taking another boy’s cell phone, or they’re in jail for missing court twice.’



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Youth Told us About Health, Mental Health and Addictions Treatment:

“I haven’t gone for any help or been in any kind of treatments. Haven’t had time, in my kind of world like I live, I have to just deal with it.”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Agency Staff Told us About Health, Mental Health and Addictions Treatment:

“When youth are requesting something, it is when they need it. And they need immediate follow-up.”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Youth Told us About Housing:

“I was stuck paying \$475 for a suite in a rooming house that had holes in the ceilings cut out, big gaping holes and black mould and bedbugs.”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

What Agency Staff Told us About Housing:

“Our government needs to be responsible for this. Systems working together is not going to eliminate the housing shortage.”



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SYSTEM PATHWAYS INTO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Recommendations and Next Steps



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THE WINNIPEG STREET CENSUS 2015



Thank You!

Volunteers, Partners, Supporters and Participants

PARTNERS:

**Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives of Manitoba
Canadian Mental Health Association of Manitoba
Eagle Urban Transition Centre
Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg
John Howard Society of Manitoba
Lived Experience Circle
Macdonald Youth Services
Main Street Project
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
Mount Carmel Clinic
RaY (Resource Assistance for Youth)
Rossbrook House
Salvation Army Booth Centre**

Siloam Mission

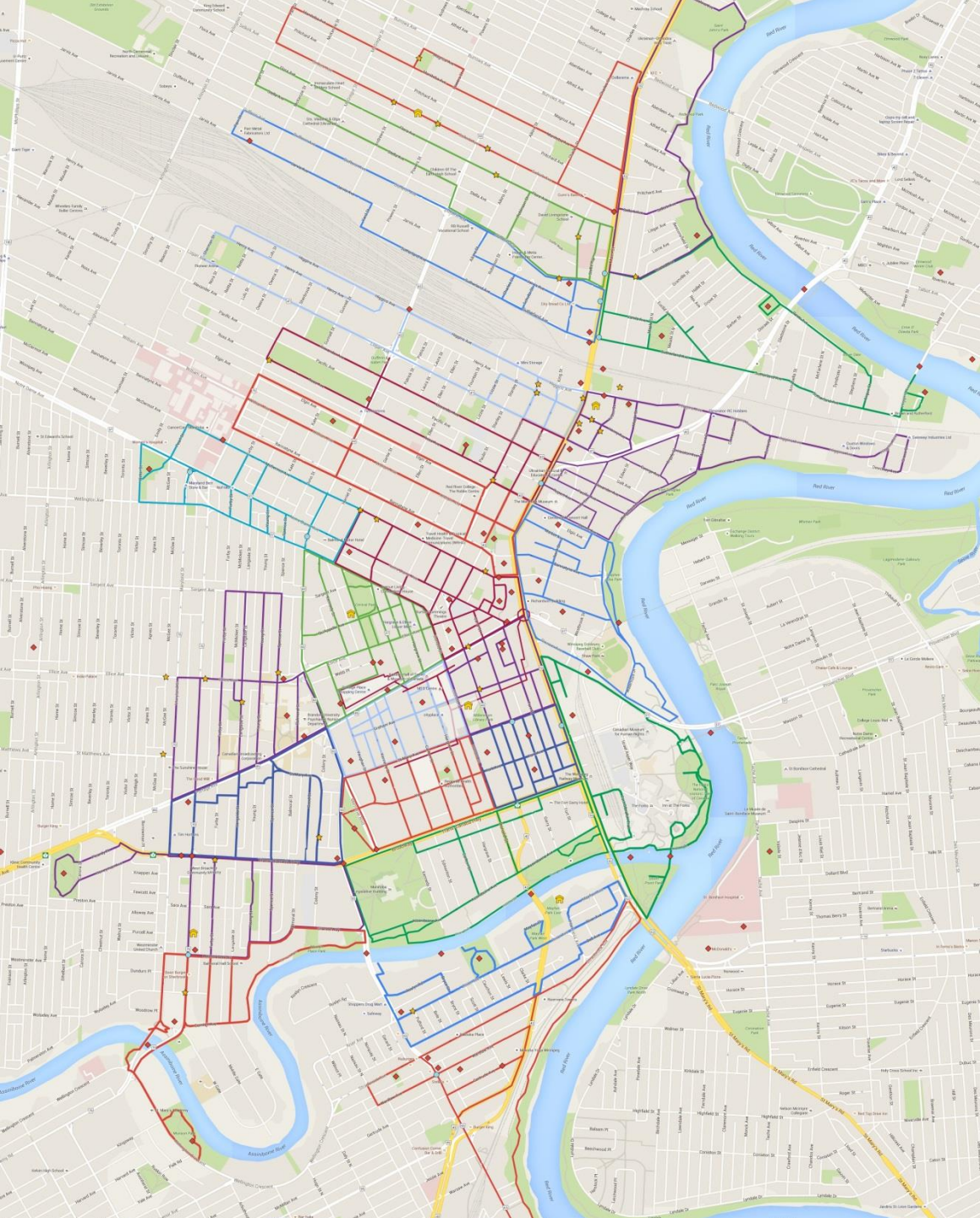
**Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
Spence Neighbourhood Association
Sunshine House
West Central Womens Resource Centre
Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council –
End Homelessness Winnipeg**

SUPPORTERS:

**Amalgamated Transit Union
City of Winnipeg
North End Community Ambassadors
St. Boniface Street Links
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Winnipeg Downtown BIZ
Winnipeg Police Services**

THE WINNIPEG STREET CENSUS 2015

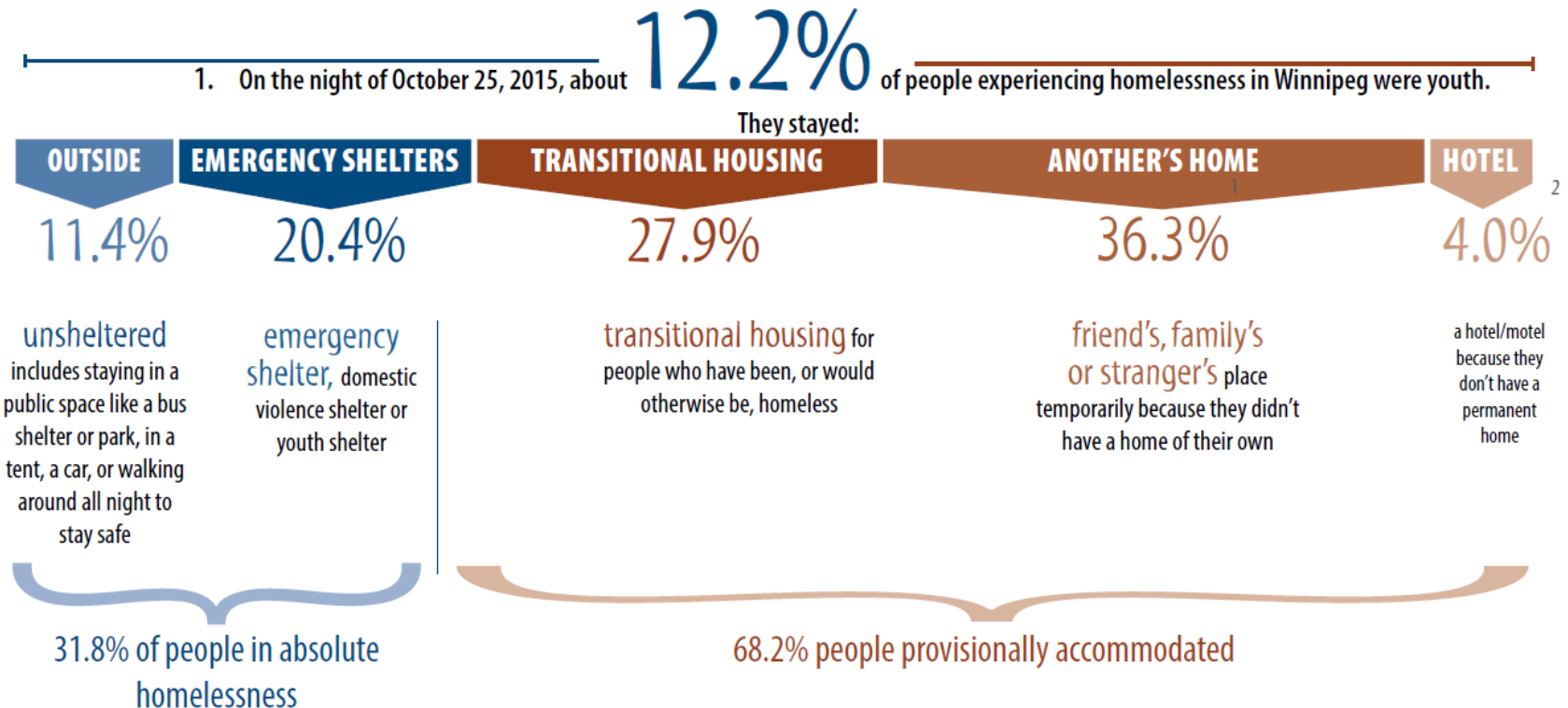




- **24** hours
- **300** volunteers
- **7** emergency, domestic violence, and youth shelters
- **9** transitional housing locations
- **10** bottle depots
- **29** community agencies
- **27** walking routes
- **140**km of inner city streets

How Many Youth?

Youth Homelessness = the experience of a person under the age of 30 without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.



THE WINNIPEG STREET CENSUS 2015



10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

2. Youth homelessness leads to adult homelessness.

The median age at which all survey respondents first became homeless was **24** years, and the most frequent age was **18** years.

3. Of those experiencing homelessness for 10+ years, the majority (70%) first became homeless when they were **18** years or younger.

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10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

4. The most common reason youth experienced homelessness for the first time was **family conflict or breakdown**. **38.0%** became homeless for this reason, 2/3 of those involved either entering or leaving foster care or group homes.

5. Over half, **68.2%** of youth spent time in **foster care or group homes**.

10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

6. **23.1%** of youth are part of **LGBTQ** community. This is about double the proportion in the overall homeless population.

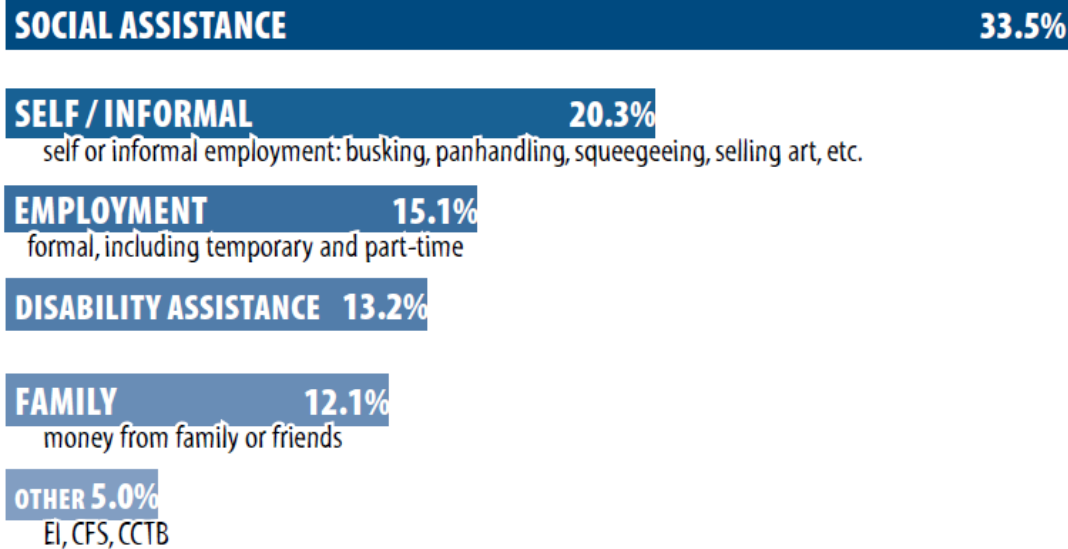
10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

7. **44.1%** of youth were homeless for **6 months** or longer. **45.6%** experienced **3 or more episodes** of homelessness in the past three years.

10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

Income

8. Income sources (respondents could choose more than one)



36.7% said that **low income** is a barrier to finding housing.

Those with no income spoke about being cut-off, waiting for, or unable to receive income assistance. Some lacked the necessary identification. Others said they were eligible but felt too proud to ask for assistance.

10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

9. **84.6%** of youth identify as **Indigenous**. Almost half of First Nations youth grew up in a First Nations community, and half of them moved to Winnipeg in the last year.

10. Overall, **30.3%** of youth **moved to Winnipeg** in the past year

THE WINNIPEG STREET CENSUS 2015





Essentials of a Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness

Naomi Leadbeater, Community Development
Coordinator

Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal
Corporation

Essentials of a Plan to End Youth Homelessness

- Communities adopt *strategic and coordinated plans*
- Create an *integrated systems response/System of Care*
- Engagement by *all levels of government*
- Adopt a *youth development orientation*
- Incorporate *research, data management and information sharing*
- *Integrated Prevention Framework*
- *Emergency Services: Retool the System*
- Age Appropriate *Models of Accommodation and Support*
 - *Housing first isn't just about housing*

Why is a National and Provincial Context Important?

- If strategic plans align throughout the province and the nation, more support will follow.
- Data can be compared city to city and community to community
- Resources:
 - Youth Homelessness Planning Framework and Toolkit
 - Youth Homelessness Prevention Framework
 - Housing First for Youth Framework
 - LGBTQ Toolkit
 - Youth Engagement Toolkit

Aligning federal, provincial, territorial and

local efforts

Ensuring that government policy,
programming and funding supports
community efforts



Community planning and progr

A WAY HOME



Key National Partners



Shifting Context – How can we all work together

1

Resources & knowledge mobilization

2

Migration – what we know & how it affects our plans

3

Speaking with one voice

Shifting Context

- 1** Conceptual shift taking hold, moving from 'managing' homelessness, to "preventing, reducing and ending homelessness"
- 2** Demonstrated successes in government and community planning
- 3** Research: Greater knowledge about solutions and effective interventions
- 4** Enhanced community readiness
- 5** Increasing collaboration by national partners in supporting those processes

What is Homelessness Prevention?



Three Approaches:

1. Broad, **population-based** approaches



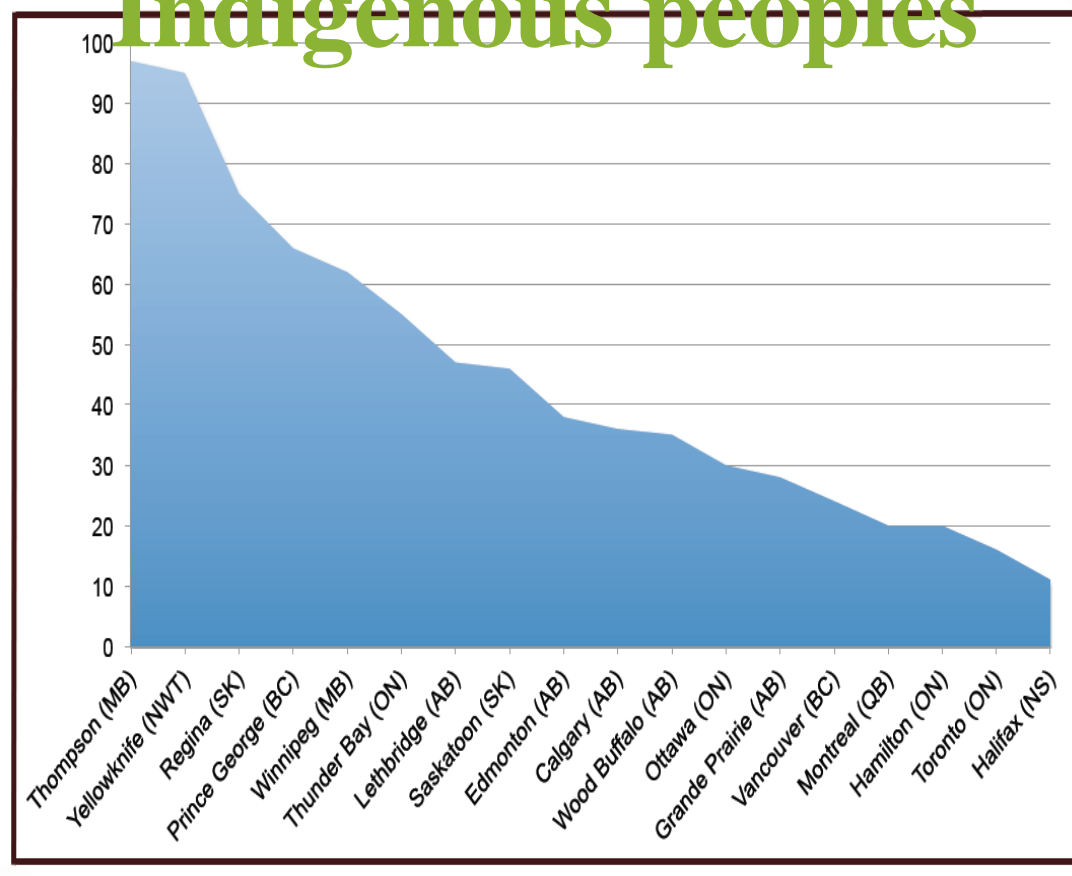
2. **Targeted strategies** aimed at 'at risk' individuals and families



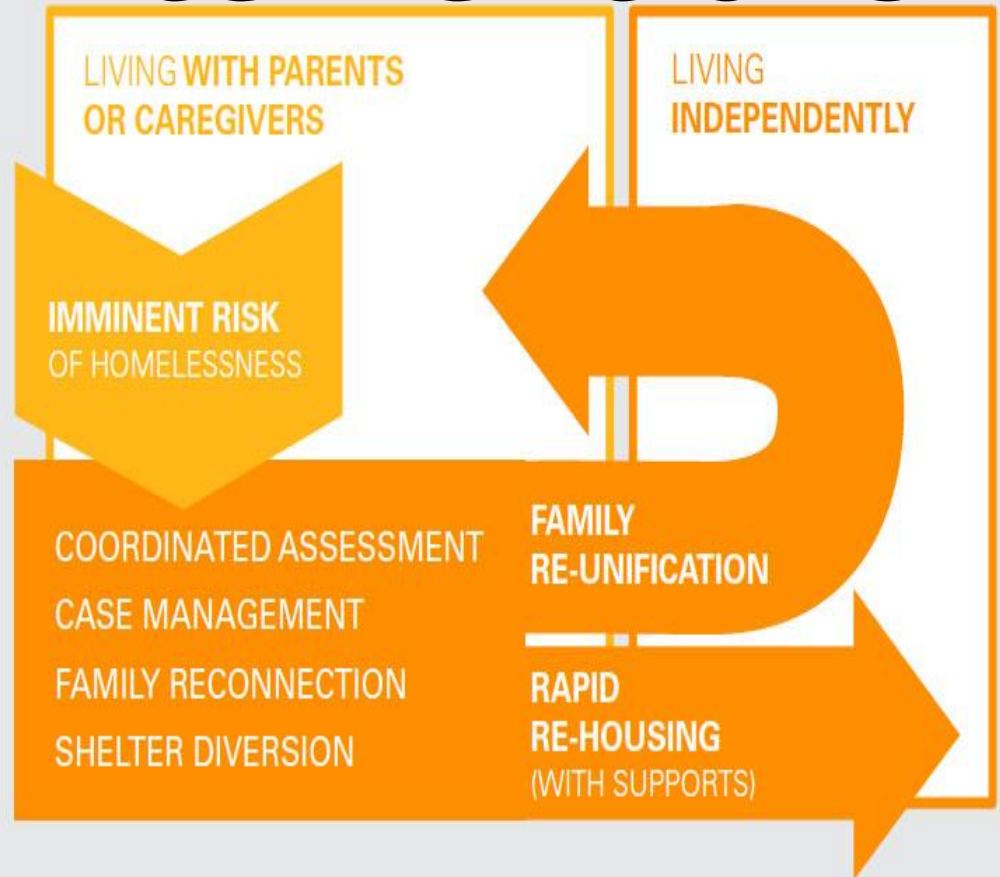
3. **Systems Prevention:**
Stemming flow from
institutional care
and service



Address the social and economic exclusion of Indigenous peoples

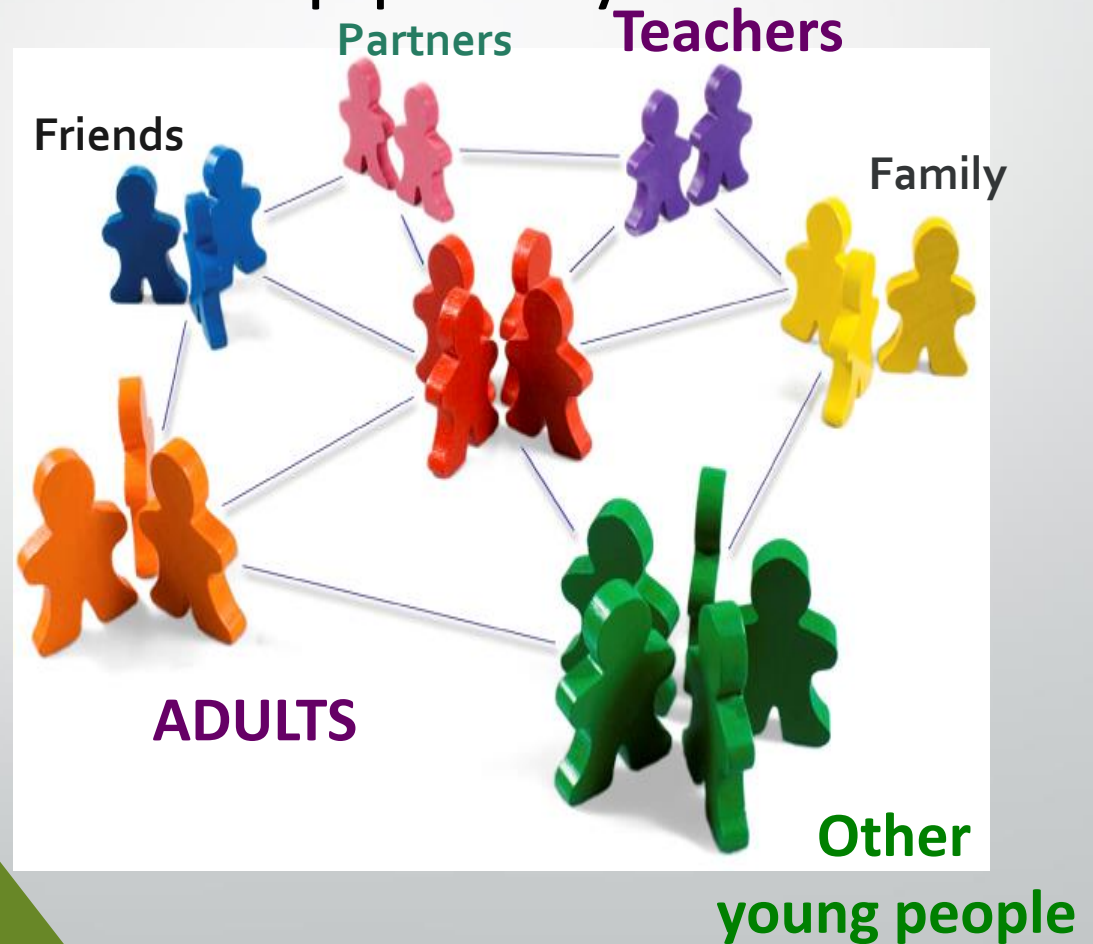


Early interventions

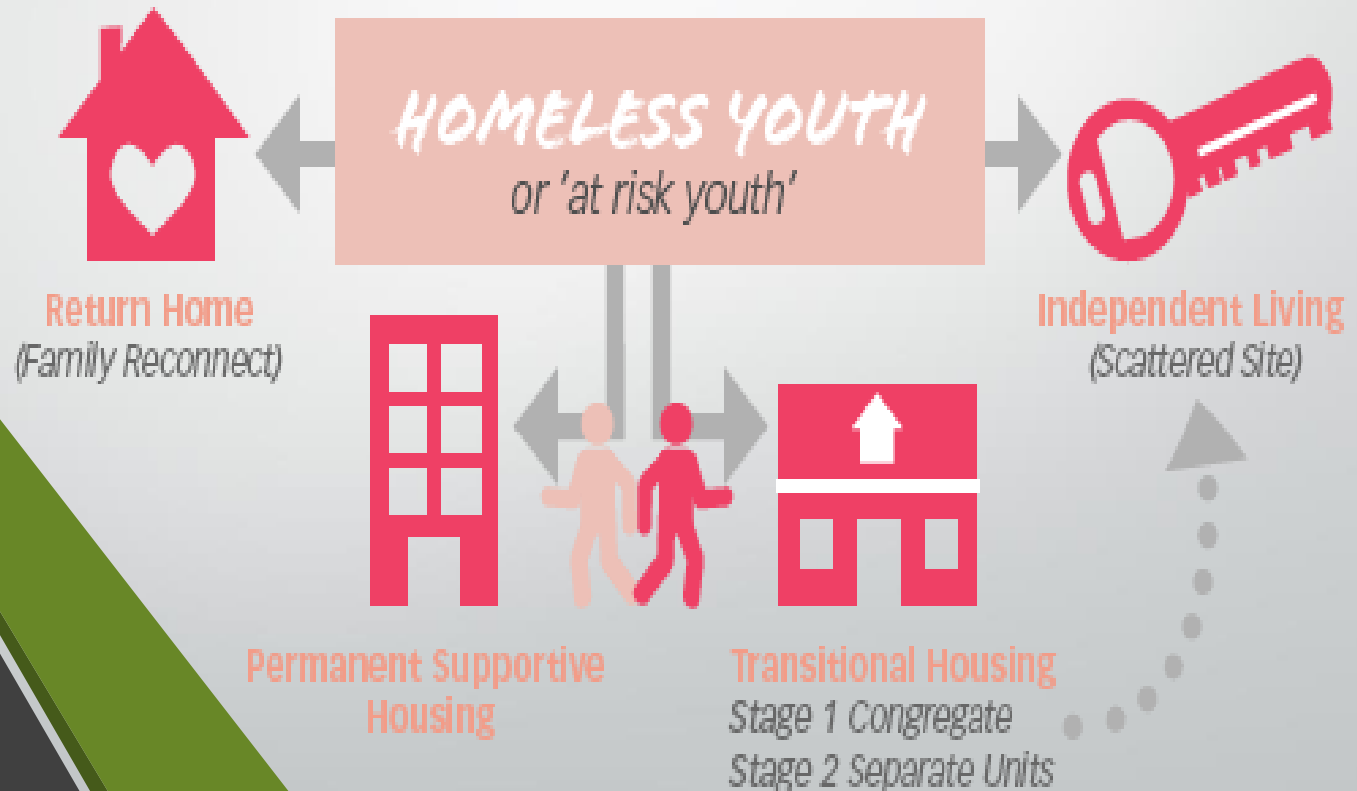


Shelter Diversion through **Host Homes**

Keeping people in their communities
should be a top priority



Youth need different Housing Options



Considerations for

Throughout the Plan ~~you must~~ **planning** consider the specific needs and issues facing:



- LGBTQ youth
- Indigenous youth
- Newcomer youth
- Racialized Youth
- Youth with mental health and/or addictions barriers

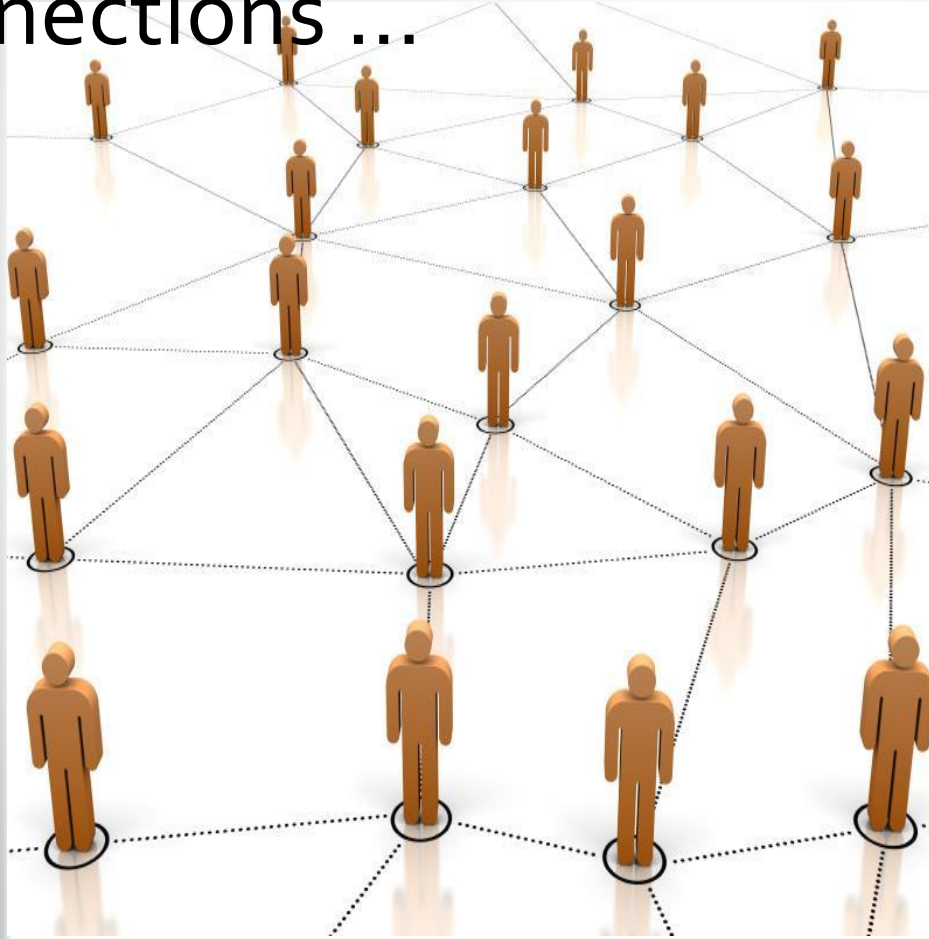
Effective Program Models

Preventing, Reducing and Ending Youth Homelessness



Breaking down isolation

- making national connections ...



The role of higher levels of government



December 4,
2015
Visioning Summit



1. Breakout Groups

**Primary Prevention
Systems Prevention
Early Intervention
Emergency Services
Accommodation and Supports**

2. Systems Recommendations

3. Photo Priorities and Art Area